

120.  
*Personal Remembrance among the Joys of the other World,*

SET FORTH IN

A DISCOURSE

OCCASIONED BY

THE DEATH OF THE  
HONOURABLE RICHARD SPENCER,  
YOUNGEST SON  
OF THE  
EARL AND COUNTESS SPENCER.

---

---

BY JOSEPH JEKYLL RYE, A. B. *K*

VICAR OF DALLINGTON, AND CHAPLAIN TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD CATHCART.

---

---

L O N D O N :

PRINTED BY E. HODSON, NO. 21, BELL-YARD, TEMPLE BAR.

SOLD BY DEIGHTON, HOLBORN; WALTERS, SOUTH AUDLEY-STREET, GROSVENOR-  
SQUARE; HAZARD, AT BATH; FLETCHER, AT OXFORD; LACY AND  
SON, AND T. BURNHAM, NORTHAMPTON.

1791.

20



Performed Remembrance among the Jews of the other World.

A DISURSE



THE DEATH OF THE  
HONORABLE RICHARD SPENCER

YOUNGEST SON

EARL AND COUNTESS SPENCER

BY JOSEPH  
VICAR OF DALLINGTON, AND TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD CATHART



LONDON

PRINTED BY E. HODGSON, NO. 21, BELL-YARD, TEMPLE

FORBES, DUBLIN, HORN, & WALKER, LONDON, AND  
J. HARRIS, HARRIS, AT BATH, & J. HARRIS, AT OXFORD

T O

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
LAVINIA, COUNTESS SPENCER,

**T**HIS Discourse, which originated from a Conversation which the Author had with her Ladyship upon the subject of a Personal Remembrance in a future State, is most gratefully and respectfully inscribed, as a testimony of that piety and resignation which distinguished her Ladyship on the death of her infant Son; and as a token of gratitude for her particular kindness to

THE AUTHOR.



TO  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
LAVINIA COUNTESS SPENCER,

---

**N. B.** If any Profit should arise from the Sale of the Sermon after  
the Expence of Publifhing is difcharged, it will be given to the  
**SUNDAY SCHOOL of Bringdon, in the County of Northampton.**



---

THE AUTHOR



2 SAMUEL xii. 23.

*I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*

---

THE words of my text are part of a memorable reply made by King David to his attendants, who were surprised at the singularity of his behaviour on the death of his child. The relation at large is, that when it pleased God, for just reasons, to strike the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick; David fasted, and went in, and lay all night on the earth. And when the elders of his house went to him to raise him up, he would not; neither did he eat bread with them. On the seventh day it came to pass that the child died. The sequel of the story is, that the servants of David, justly apprehending, that as his grief had been so great during the illness of his child, his death might overcome him, were afraid to inform him of it.—“Behold,” said they among themselves, “while the child was yet alive

B

“we



“ we spake unto him, and he would not hearken to our voice; “ how will he then vex himself when we tell him that the “ child is dead.”—His death however being at length discovered to David, the real event was, that he arose from the earth, washed, and anointed himself; changed his apparel!—came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped! then went to his own house, required bread, and did eat!—This unexpected composure and serenity astonished his anxious attendants, and they were induced to enquire the reason. “ What “ thing is this (say they) that thou hast done? Thou didst “ fast and weep for the child, while it was alive, but when “ the child was dead thou didst rise and eat bread?”—Thus questioned, David answered as a man well acquainted with the purposes of Providence: The hopes he had in this life formed with respect to the child, were irrevocably at an end: but instead of desponding and sinking under affliction, he diminishes his sorrow; and looking forward with confidence to a future state, thus reasons with his attendants:—“ Now he “ is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back “ again?” And in the words of my text subjoins his consolation:—“ I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me!” When we commit our friends to the tomb it is natural for us to lament their loss; and while we are careful not to exceed the limits of decent sorrow, the tears we shed will be forgiven;



forgiven; for we cannot (nor need we) divest ourselves of that sensibility, by God himself implanted, for the most beneficent purposes, in our breast. When turning from every comfort that reason may dictate, and revelation must confirm, we seem to question the justice and goodness of God's providence, forgetful that He imposes not upon us his afflictive hand, but for the wisest and most gracious purposes. Were we properly on these occasions to regard ourselves, we might discover failings to justify the stroke: Like the royal person who uttered the words of the text, we may perhaps have abused the prosperity with which we have been blessed, and thus require some adverse check, to direct the thoughtless soul to the acknowledgment of God's superintendence, and to convince us, as David *was* convinced, of His mercy in punishment. "It is good for me (says the royal penitent) that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes. Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word."—It is too common for men in the enjoyment of health and prosperity, to forget the calamities that may befall them, the reverse of fortune to which they are every moment exposed, and the decay and death to which they are certainly doomed. For some years the life of man may gently glide away in the sunshine of prosperity; every earthly blessing attending: But this should not stifle the reflection,



that storms may arise, and misfortunes overwhelm us; to be unmindful of this, argues folly and presumption. Sickness, poverty, and the loss of friends, are, as instruments of mercy in the hands of Providence, to withdraw our attention from terrestrial objects to the consideration of a future state: for beneath the pressure of these afflictions, what can afford greater relief than the idea, the well-founded assurance, that this life is not the last scene of things; that death, in appearance only, terminates our existence, that the grave is not to be triumphant, that no eternal separation takes place between us and our departed friends, but that we again shall meet them in another world, where "God shall wipe away  
 "all tears from our eyes; and there shall be no more death,  
 "neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more  
 "pain, for the former things will be passed away."—It not having been within the purpose of God's revelation to acquaint us with the particular blessings of a future state, it has been a question often anxiously and earnestly asked, whether by the plan of Divine Providence we shall enjoy in the world to come, any knowledge of persons, according to the circumstances that respectively distinguished them on earth? It is an enquiry naturally very interesting, and which, while pursued with no intemperate disposition to pry into "the hidden  
 "things," may be reasonably allowed. If the desire of being  
 associated



associated with those superior souls who have done honour to human nature, were not enough to justify it, yet surely it may be excused, if those whose days were spent amid the endearments and "charities" of social life, express some wish to learn whether it can be within the compass of God's designs, that we hereafter be raised to a new enjoyment of those connections which originated on earth, and whether there will be any remembrance of those partial and peculiar ties by which we are in the present world attached.

That some connections will of necessity terminate with this life, is not to be disputed. Such, for instance, as depend on those animal affections and instincts which peculiarly pertain to our present existence, and whereof the occasion ceases with the world itself. Our Saviour, therefore, though he deigned not to make it absolutely "appear what we shall be," thus far has condescended to lay open to us a future state, as to declare that we "shall resemble the angels, who neither marry nor are given in marriage."—This connection is evidently well excluded from a state where the multiplication of mankind will be over; yet the union of kinds, and the harmony of dispositions, that from such connections have arisen, may still not be excluded. The social affections, undefiled and uncorrupted, seem admirably calculated to come within God's dispen-



dispensation of perfect felicity. Such a conjecture may not be unreasonable, when the state of our first parents is considered, who were created for immortality, and who, so far from being devoid of the social affections, have been always supposed to have been eminently under their influence: So tempered indeed, and chastened, as that hereafter to form some portion of man's celestial happiness. That state might for ever have continued, "For God made not death: He had created all things that they might have their being: Ungodly men, with their works and words, called it to them." To solve the main question, however, men have had frequent recourse to revelation, as well as to natural religion; and in their appeal to both they have not been disappointed in finding much to encourage such expectations. Though the Polytheism of the Heathens, and the disgusting vices of their reputed Gods, would almost deter us from any reference to them, to determine a question so connected with our religious hopes; yet, as their poets have been always supposed to have written in conformity to the opinions of the times they lived in, and their philosophers wanted no light but the light of revelation, we may safely look to them for that law of Nature which has been held to consist in general opinion. The schoolmen, however, will afford us the more regular decision of human reason diligently applied to the subject. It would take  
up



up too much time to examine all the arguments that might be brought from their writings; and indeed it is enough for our purpose, to be able confidently to assert, that there are scarce any, who have believed in the immortality of the soul, who have not *expressed* their expectation of a personal remembrance. Homer, whom in every succeeding age men have agreed to consider, not only as a poet, but as one of the most ancient historians of the world, has with peculiar force related the intimacy of Achilles and Patroclus (two inseparable friends) in the shades below. I dare not dwell myself on an argument brought from a work of imagination; yet I think it not amiss to add *this* weight to the circumstance. “The poets, “says the incomparable Sherlock, whose business it is to raise “fine scenes upon the plan and probability of Nature, would “not have so painted the torments and the enjoyments of “men departed; neither would the world have received such “inventions, had there been no foundation in Nature to support the romance.” I content myself with a bare reference to the other poets, and most of the ancient philosophers, and pass on to a remarkable and very applicable passage from one of the wisest of them, and one of the most reasonable:— “O glorious day (says the good old man in Cicero) when “I shall depart from this crowd of men upon earth, and be “admitted into the assembly of those divine spirits!—I am  
“transported



“transported with the desire of seeing my forefathers, those  
 “excellent persons, of whom I have heard, and read, and  
 “written;—and now I am going to them: I would not wil-  
 “lingly be drawn back into this world again. If some God  
 “would offer me at this age to be a child again, and to cry  
 “in the cradle, I would earnestly refuse, and upon no terms  
 “accept it: And now that my race is almost run, my course  
 “just finished, how reluctantly should I be brought back,  
 “and compelled to renew it! For in life what is the advan-  
 “tage? Nay, rather what labour and trouble does it not pro-  
 “duce? But whatever may be its benefit, there is certainly  
 “of life, as of other things, some proper measure; and men  
 “ought to know when they have enough of it.”—This was a  
 striking reach of thought, for one who was unenlightened by  
 the beams of the gospel. Unappalled at his expected, his ap-  
 proaching dissolution, he exults in the pleasing idea of meeting  
 in a future world those exalted characters, who had done  
 honour to human nature, and left behind them, by their vir-  
 tuous and noble actions, a bright and lasting track of glory.  
 These conjectures of a celebrated philosopher, founded on the  
 dictates of reason, have been confirmed by revelation, which  
 has partly drawn aside the veil that divided this and the  
 other world.—She has opened to us engaging prospects for  
 piety and virtue;—She has assured us, that when this short  
 life



life is ended, we shall reside "with the spirits of just men,  
 "made perfect; with an innumerable company of angels;  
 "with Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant; and with  
 "God, the judge of all. Father, says the blessed Saviour of  
 "mankind, I will that those that thou hast given me, may  
 "be with me, that they may behold my glory!" [§]

From these conclusions of reason, and passages of revelation,  
 we have surely little occasion to apprehend, that all the con-  
 nections which take place on earth, and which are founded in  
 piety and virtue, will be for ever dissolved, when our bodies  
 shall lie down in the dust. Without the supposition of a personal  
 knowledge of each other in a future state, it seems difficult to  
 say how the crime of hypocrisy is to be punished, or a just  
 retribution made to those who for righteousness' sake have en-  
 dured the persecution of the world. "When God," says a very  
 excellent writer, "condemns hypocrites to everlasting punish-  
 ment, for "their vile abuse of religion to ungodly purposes and  
 "selfish designs, it is but reasonable that they who have been in  
 "this world deceived by their outward form of godliness, should  
 "be satisfied, by seeing the secret wickedness of their hearts  
 "displayed, that they do deserve the punishment which is  
 "allotted them. And thus when God rewards some with  
 "eternal happiness, who have lost their reputation in the eyes



“ of the world, by the malice or treachery of others; unless  
 “ He at that great public audit, does unto all discover their  
 “ integrity, his justice will not be displayed with that exactness  
 “ as is requisite for the righteous God to have it.”—Besides, it  
 seems to be particularly the design of Providence, to heighten  
 the effect of the general judgment, by a personal contrast of  
 the good and bad:—“ There shall be weeping and gnashing  
 “ of teeth,” says our blessed Saviour, “ when ye *shall see*  
 “ Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in  
 “ the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out!”

Let us again appeal to the authority of revelation. Our  
 Saviour, in his parable of the rich man and Lazarus, has  
 given us an exemplification of the point we are discussing.  
 We there find that the rich man knew both Abraham and  
 Lazarus in the place of departed spirits; and when our  
 Saviour was transfigured before three of his disciples, Peter,  
 James, and John, we are informed that Moses and Elias ap-  
 peared unto them, talking with him. The Apostle Saint  
 Paul, who had no sooner planted the gospel in one country,  
 but he was immediately summoned to commence his labours  
 in another, so that his stay was short among those friends he  
 loved, endeared to him by mutual conflicts and sufferings for  
 the christian faith, endeavours to alleviate their affliction at  
 his



his departure, by assuring them, that the present separation was only transitory, and not final:—"For what is our hope and our joy, or crown of rejoicing," says he, "are not even ye at the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus manifesting the earnest desire that influenced him to persuade his Theffalonian converts, that the pleasing intercourse of virtuous minds, which might receive a temporary suspension by death, would after resurrection of the body be revived.

If reason and revelation thus support us in the expectation of a future knowledge of each other, how glorious a prospect have we before us, when admitted into the society of happier spirits in another world: the wise, the holy, and the just! It is scarce possible to describe it in better words than an excellent divine of the present day has made use of:—"There will be no distress to trouble our mutual bliss; no source of disagreement to interrupt our present harmony. Artifice and concealment will be unknown there; there will be no competitors to struggle; no factions to contend; no rivals to supplant each other. The voice of discord will never rise; the whisper of suspicion never circulate among those innocent and benevolent spirits. Each, happy in himself, will participate in the happiness of all the rest; and by reciprocal communications of love and friendship, at once



" receive from, and add to the sum of general felicity. Re-  
 " new the memory of the most affectionate friends with whom  
 " you were blessed in any period of your life; divest them  
 " of all those infirmities which adhere to the human charac-  
 " ter; recall the most pleasing and tender moments which  
 " you ever enjoyed in their society; and the remembrance of  
 " those sensations may assist you in conceiving that felicity  
 " prepared for you above."

How happy shall we be to discover in those mansions of  
 eternal bliss, both those who death preceded, and those who  
 survived us. Then will our memory retrace those scenes passed  
 in this lower world, and we shall rejoice in the reflection of  
 having put a proper estimate on earthly things; at not having  
 misemployed the talents committed to us by our Creator; at  
 having applied our power and opulence (if such were our  
 gifts) in mitigating the sorrows of our fellow creatures, and  
 not suffering the widow and orphan to plead in vain for re-  
 lief at our hands; or, if on the contrary, our lot was cast in  
 lower life, to go forth in the morning to labour, and not re-  
 turn till the setting sun, we may recollect with delight that we  
 were careful not to murmur or repine at the dispensations of  
 Providence, but contentedly performed our duty towards  
 God, in religious confidence that our worldly sufferings would  
 be



be recompensed, and work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Will not our happiness be exalted, when those whom on earth we loved, and whose sufferings during their sojourning here excited our compassion, we see rewarded, everlastingly rewarded, for their exemplary conduct under the severe trials of adversity? On the other hand, can imagination represent the misery of those departed spirits, who, while on earth, were disobedient to their Creator's laws, when they recognize one another in a future state? What will be their mutual upbraidings and reproaches for having been confederates in wickedness? Their numbers and their confederacy will not alleviate their sufferings.

Another source of happiness to the blessed in Heaven will be the removal of all mental darkness, and those prejudices to which our short sighted understandings always subject us.

So inattainable is truth, in our present state of existence, that though "we seek for it as silver," we hardly guess aright at objects which immediately strike our senses; and instead of benefiting by the experience of others, we generally try

to



to alienate our affections from those who (right or wrong) differ from us in opinion.

Another great and most reasonable ground of happiness in Heaven, will be the comfortable assurance, that those friends we meet there we shall associate with for ever.

In this world the triumphs of death are awfully conspicuous. We can hardly go into a house without perceiving some dreadful chasm. A widow bewailing the loss of her husband; a parent "weeping for her children, and refusing to "be comforted because they are not."—Particular and unavoidable circumstances often separate the nearest relations, and the common occupations of our imperfect life, frequently prevent a personal intercourse between the best and dearest friends. Bodily infirmities interrupt our enjoyment of society, and hardly a day passes without some calamity, and some occasion of grief. But in heaven all uneasiness will have an end. Let us comfort ourselves therefore, that soon our troubles will cease, our infirmities will vanish, our cares be extinguished, and under the greatest worldly affliction, the *death of friends*, let us remember, that though they cannot return to us, assuredly we may go them.

The



The words of the text, connected with the occasion on which they were uttered, lead me to a farther observation, with which I shall conclude.

David consoles himself with the religious hope of seeing his beloved child again in heaven.

Now the hope of a future meeting with our departed friends, can only be justly indulged, when we purpose so to follow their good examples as to merit to become partakers with them of God's heavenly kingdom.

The life, however, of an infant could not have been either active or exemplary in holy works, yet David was not diffident of that ground at least of his hope, that thither certainly his child was gone before him, and was already received into Abraham's bosom. Reason, and a just notion of the infinite goodness of God, naturally led him to suppose that children would not be excluded from the Divine Presence \*. With what sublimity our blessed Saviour, many years after David, confirmed this expectation, is almost too well known to repeat:—"Suffer," says he to his mistaken disciples, "little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God."—The reasonings of the philosophers,



philosophers, and the ethics of the schoolmen, fall far short of this divine and comprehensive lesson. Morality might be lost in systems, and definitions, and logical distinctions, while this sentence might serve to direct us unerringly in a proper rule of life. It is not a bare admission into heaven that is granted to children, but we are told that "*of such is the kingdom of God.*"—The greater advances we make in virtue and holiness the nearer we approach to the innocence of children. Artless and simple in their manners, without dissimulation or disguise; their hearts are not sullied with malignant passions, nor their minds corrupted by inordinate desires; smiling on the world around them, they harbour in their breasts no hatred, no envy, no malice or revenge! Their desires are blameless, their pursuits innocent, their thoughts pure. They murmur not against God's providence, nor blaspheme his holy name. Uncontaminated by the world, they know no sin. *Of such* will be the kingdom of God! It should therefore be the constant purpose of those whom worldly pleasures have debauched, to eradicate the seeds of their evil propensities, and, as far as may be, to reduce themselves to that native innocence which the commerce of the world must have sullied and obscured. Our care, too, should for ever be exerted to protect the purity of infant minds: "Whatever things are true, whatever things are just, whatever things  
" are



"are venerable, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things  
 "are of good report," should perpetually be set before them.  
 Let it be allowed to praise the times in which we live. There  
 are some virtuous souls of the present day, who have not  
 neglected these cares: May they be had in everlasting re-  
 membrance, and their prayers and their alms go up as a  
 memorial before God!

I conclude with exhorting those weeping parents whom  
 God may have afflicted with a distress like David's, to take *his*  
 comfort to themselves, especially since "*a more sure word*"  
 of consolation has been spoken to them, in our blessed  
 Saviour's memorable assurance of adoption and regard.



## APPENDIX.

*Page 7, L. 3.]* It has been God's constant purpose to recall, by some signal circumstance, man's wandering mind, and elevate it from earthly to heavenly thoughts and pursuits. This, according to Strabo, was clearly the design of the Jewish Festivals, in which they were commanded to rest from their labour and worldly employments. Τον μὲν ἀπαχύνει ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀσχολία τῶν, τὸν δὲ εὖ τρεφεῖν ἔπος τοῦ θείου. *Geograph. L. 10.* This was the use of punishments and afflictions according to Pellianus: "Hæc sunt arma Dei contra insensatos," &c. See him on *Leviticus* xxvi.

*Page 8, L. 8.]* "Tu habeto, te non esse mortalem, sed corpus; nec enim is es, quem forma ista declarat, sed mens cujusque." *Cicero.*

*Page 10, L. 7.]*

Hail wedded Love! \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_By thee

Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,  
Relations dear, and all the charities  
Of father, son, and brother, first were known:  
Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,  
Or think thee *unbefitting holiest place*,  
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets!

*Milton's Par. Lost, B. IV.*

*Page 10, L. 8.]* Wisdom ch. i.

*Page 10, L. 22.]* "Omni in re consensio omnium genitum lex  
"natura putandæ est." *Jusc. Quæst, lib. I.*

*Page*



Page 11, L. 10.] The Poet's idea of the Infernal Regions and Elyfian Fields is of Egyptian origin.

Mr. Pope and Dacier both agree that the eleventh book of the *Odyssey* is an evidence of the antiquity of the opinion of the immortality of the soul. The evocation of the dead being the most ancient of all divinations. Mr. Pope refers on this occasion to Saul's evocation of Samuel.

Page 11, L. 19.] See particularly Virgil, L. 6. *Æn.* & Georg. Lib. IV. Lucan *Pharsalia*, Lib. VI. Lucan was a Disciple of Cornutus the Stoic. How far the doctrines of the Stoics supported the idea we are discussing, may be seen concisely studied in White's Sermons, P. 138. See also the *Perfæ* of *Æschylus*.

Page 11, L. 22.] De Senectute.

Page 13, L. 16.] Nichols's Conference, Vol. II. 186.

Page 14, L. 2.] Revelation is explicit on this subject: "My Father, which seeth in secret, will reward thee openly." *Matt.* vi. 4.

Page 13, L. 16. [§] See this subject enlarged on in Mr. Agutter's Sermon on the Death of Mr. Henderson, of Pembroke College, page 25. *Ὁν φιλεῖ Θεός, ὁμοκεῖ νεός.* See likewise *Wisdom.* iv. 13.

Page 19, L. 16. \*] Dr. Hutchins, the late Rector of Lincoln College in the University of Oxford, permitted a strong and vigorous understanding to be obscured by the gloom of speculative Calvinism; and contemplates with pleasure the *divine justice* consigning poor little infants to endless misery, "for the evil which He foresaw they "would have done."

Page 14, L. 10.] Compare Psalm cxii. 6, 9, 10.

The observations of the wise man are too striking to pass unnoticed:

"Then



" Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before  
" the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his  
" labours.

" When they see it they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and  
" shall be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation, so far beyond  
" all that they looked for.

" And they, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirits, shall  
" say within themselves, This was he whom we had sometimes in  
" derision and a proverb of reproach. We fools counted his life  
" madness, and his end to be without honour.

" How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is  
" among saints!" *Wisdom, ch. v.*

Page 15, L. 14.] Blair, vol II. Sermon. 9.

Page 16, L. 11.] " Non igitur renascentur, quod fieri non  
" potest; sed resurgent, et a Deo corporibus induentur et prioris  
" vitæ, factorumq; omnium memores erunt." *Div. Just. l. 7. c. 23.*

The Author thinks it but just to acknowledge the pleasure which  
he derived from a late Funeral Sermon by Dr. Abraham Rees.



F I N I S.



